

DISABILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

April 29, 2019

1. Fr. Mark opened with a prayer and advised that he had two other parish meetings occurring at the same time, so we revised the order of the agenda to address his priorities.
2. Fr. Mark passed around a sample large-print missal that was under consideration. The general consensus of those present was that the print was not large enough to justify any expenditure. Recommend pursuing competitive offers that have larger print.
3. Fr. Mark gave an overview of how to use the hearing assistive devices, and we agreed to incorporate that overview into our introduction during Masses in May.
4. Val Bleau offered to test the FM loop system in the church and report back.
5. Marie Winterson advised that May 18/19 is best weekend for the committee introductions. Rob will present at all Masses, joined by a different committee member for each Mass.
6. We discussed topics for the introduction (see transcript sent separately 5/19). Fr. Mark said it was important to convey the original offer by Terry and Monique to reach out to other families that may be dealing with similar situations and don't know who to talk with or how to seek help.
7. Fr Mark mentioned the parish has contacted Architect Bernie Gay, who helped St Jerome's and other older churches with ADA improvements. Essentially everyone on the committee is interested in meeting with him to see what his ideas are especially regarding accessibility of Four Seasons Room from the main level of the church, and installing a restroom at entrance of the church.
8. We went up to the church and Loren Lavoy described his idea for modifying some of the pews to make room for wheelchairs: remove approximately four feet from the end of the pew (to the first vertical support) and smooth sand the edges. This will provide space for a wheelchair, and make it easier for someone to slide onto the pew or back onto the wheelchair. After general discussion, the general consensus was to recommend converting up to four pews on the inside aisle (two in front and two toward the back), and up to four on the outside aisles. Some wheelchair users will not want to "be on display", so to speak, hence the thought to put some on outside and in the back half. Someone suggested that Phil Duck or Jim Thompson may be able to do this work.
9. Mary O'Meara stated that Bob Messer works for the Archdiocese and may be able to review the Church/School blueprints and advise what could be done to join the 5 separate levels of the church and school.
10. General discussion of parish website provided these recommendations:
 - create a page for Disabilities Ministry and put a link on the main site.
 - increase visibility of Mass times, especially schedule for ASL-interpreters.
 - access to School of Religion for children with disabilities.
 - link to the school's page
 - link to USCCB's page with the Pastoral Statement
 - link to sacramental guidelines for persons with disabilities
 - link to Facebook & Twitter accounts for Archdiocese Department of Special Needs Ministry.
<ADW.org\LivingTheFaith\SpecialNeeds\>
11. General discussion regarding the Holy Redeemer Happenings newsletter provided the following recommendation: update the format for compatibility with Braille and audio (requires text version rather than only graphics).
12. Mary recommended including a Did You Know blurb for the bulletin, summarizing what accommodations are currently available.
13. General discussion regarding ASL classes in the parish. This would be "light conversational ASL". Decided to include in the parish survey to determine general interest.
14. Several questions were suggested for the next parish survey being organized by Bob Martin of the Stewardship committee (see email sent separately 5/19).